

SITUATION REPORT NO. 15
INCIDENT NO. 99-009
DATE: May 21, 1999 TIME: 2:00 p.m.

TO: Governor Edward T. Schafer
State Capitol
Bismarck, ND 58505

1. NATURE OF DISASTER: Spring flooding – Above normal soil moisture content throughout North Dakota, compounded by seven years of flooding, has resulted in overland and river flooding.
2. DEATHS AND INJURIES: No change from previous reports.
3. DAMAGES: Road damages in Sargent County have been exacerbated by erosion, wave action and recent rainfall ranging from three to seven inches. High water standing along the edges of the roads has created sluffing-related problems, making travel difficult and hazardous. Erosion and sluffing have also impacted natural drains and legal drains. Because of high water and the force at which it travels, silting, debris and erosion are plugging drainage systems. Officials for Delamere, a village of 20 residents, reported that high water tables have caused septic system problems.

Eleven families living in lower levels of three apartment complexes in southwest Jamestown were evacuated because of uncontrolled seepage into their apartments. One home in Eldridge was evacuated after flood waters inundated the access road and surrounded the house. Another home in Pingree was also evacuated because the structure is no longer safe. The basement is filled with contaminated water that cannot be removed because there is nowhere to pump the water. Concrete walls are crumbling, and the utilities have been shut off. The Stutsman County emergency manager had received 317 reports of flood-related damages to homes and businesses by May 18. Most reported water damage to carpets, flooring, sheet-rocked or paneled walls and furniture. Other reports included contaminated wells, failed septic systems, furnace or water heater damage and concrete wall and floor damage. As a result of recent rainfall, the Jamestown Dam continues its slow rise, measuring 1,440.9 feet. The dam peaked on April 21 when the reservoir crested at 1,441.6 feet. The reservoir at Pipestem Dam also has increased, rising 4.5 feet between May 14-19. The current elevation of the dam measures 1,477.3 feet; the maximum elevation recorded occurred in 1997 when the dam rose to 1,487 feet.

LaMoure County officials have received reports of basement flooding occurring in the communities of Adrian, Berlin, Dickey, Edgeley, Jud, Kulm, Marion, Montpelier, Nortonville and Verona.

Damage to basements and farm buildings because of flooding and high water tables has also been reported in Emmons County. Many roads are under water, and additional precipitation may result in additional road inundation. Poles and guy wires, owned by utility companies, are being severely impacted by saturated soils.

Devils Lake flood waters are infiltrating man holes in the city of Minnewaukan. Repairs are underway to at least 20 of the 55 manholes.

The level of Devils Lake at Creel Bay measured 1,446.75 feet on May 21.

The Red River of the North has risen above the 32-foot flood stage at Drayton to 33.45 feet on May 21. The level at Pembina measured 37.57 feet; flood stage is 42 feet. The river is expected to crest below flood stage by May 23. Low-lying areas along the river are inundated. Ground water tables are very high throughout the county, and there is standing water in fields.

In McLean County, residents in the Butte, Max, Underwood, Garrison, Wilton and Turtle Lake areas have reported basement water-related problems to include damaged carpets, furniture and

foundations. Continuous pumping is required to prevent further damage. One residence in rural Max is surrounded by flood waters. The well has caved in, and the septic tank is inoperable. The family is hauling bottled water to the residence.

In Renville County, the cities of Mohall, Glenburn, Tolley and Sherwood have been experiencing sewer-related problems and street damages. Lagoon problems have also been reported by officials in Sherwood and Tolley. Flood waters have damaged culverts in Roosevelt Township. Since May 18, the Renville County emergency manager has received 61 calls from residents who are experiencing flood damages to basements and foundations.

Flood waters have damaged the lagoon at the city of Douglas, in Ward County, and have caused pavement to buckle in the city of Ryder.

Williams County officials have reported that flood waters washed out a Hazel Township road, leaving a gap of six to eight feet. Flood waters are over flowing a one-quarter mile section of road.

Dakota, Missouri Valley & Western Railroad, for the third consecutive year, has experienced flooding along its rail lines in North Dakota. Areas include north of Garrison and near Goose Lake, between Braddock and Kintyre. Initial damage estimates reached \$395,000, but heavy rainfall in May has resulted in further damage. The amount of additional damage has yet to be determined.

4. RESOURCES:

LOCAL: No change from previous reports.

STATE: No change from previous reports.

FEDERAL: No change from previous reports.

5. VOLUNTEER ACTION: The Salvation Army has provided assistance to nearly 700 families in Bottineau, Rolette and Towner Counties after their utilities failed and their basements flooded. The Salvation Army had been providing meals for more than 100 people a day in the Belcourt area. Nine Salvation Army staff members and seven volunteers are offering cleanup kits, blankets and emergency equipment to residents. A toll-free number, (800) 735-9625, has been established for to help residents locate flood assistance and for people who would like to volunteer. Donations, earmarked flood relief, may be mailed to: The Salvation Army, Box 3005, Bismarck, N.D. 58502.

The American Red Cross and The Salvation Army provided assistance to the Jamestown families who were evacuated from their apartments.

6. MAJOR ACTIONS: Federal, state and local Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) teams will begin evaluating damages to individual homes and businesses in 31 counties and two Indian reservations the week of May 23-29. The teams will be comprised of representatives of local emergency management officials, the N.D. Department of Human Services, the Small Business Administration (SBA) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The teams will be assessing damage to access roads, foundations and basements, water wells and sewage systems. Members of PDA teams for public infrastructure, who began fieldwork on May 18, continue their efforts to identify damages to roads, bridges, culverts and other infrastructure.

The N.D. National Guard's Engineer Brigade initiated an earth-moving project on May 21 to remove a manmade impediment, which will facilitate the natural movement of Devils Lake flood waters toward Stump Lake. An 11-member crew will remove an old road bed located on private land between the two lakes. Removal of impediments will help the water flow when it reaches its natural spill level. Staff from the N.D. State Water Commission will direct the project. Equipment in use includes two five-ton dump trucks, two tractor-trailers, one loader, one crane and one high mobility multi-wheel vehicle (HMMWV).

The city of Minnewaukan is pumping excess water entering the city through a ditch along U.S. Highway 281 and a drainage ditch on the southeast edge of the city.

The N.D. Department of Health staff has been providing technical assistance to the cities of Mohall, Glenburn, Tolley and Sherwood with their lift station and sewage lagoon problems.

In the city of Drayton, city drains were plugged when the river reached the 28-foot level, and

pumping efforts are underway. Flood kits were given to residents in Crystal, St. Thomas and Drayton.

The North Dakota State University (NDSU) Extension Service has issued a press release to assist Stutsman County residents with cleaning and drying wet carpets and with measures designed to prevent mold and mildew in basements.

Because of road closures and damages, school districts throughout the state have changed bus routes to ensure the safety of school children. The Montpelier School District, for example, changed three of its bus routes.

In McIntosh County, Water Board members and volunteers hauled sandbags in with four-wheel-drive vehicles to reinforce a dike at Green Lake.

Since the last Situation Report, the Cass, Emmons and Ward County Commissions have issued disaster declarations, and the Sargent County Commission has issued an emergency declaration. Officials for Ramsey and Stutsman Counties upgraded their emergency declarations to disaster declarations. Officials for the cities of Balfour and Anamoose in McHenry County, St. John in Rolette County and Sherwood in Renville County have issued emergency declarations. Officials for the cities of Tappen and Dawson in Kidder County have issued disaster declarations. A total of 31 counties, 18 cities and two Indian reservations have issued emergency or disaster declarations. The state of North Dakota has issued an emergency declaration.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: Assistance has been provided, as reported.
8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), American Red Cross, consulting engineers, N.D. Department of Transportation (DOT) staff and members of the N.D. Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD).
9. OTHER: The next State Flood Coordination Center meeting has been scheduled for Thursday, June 17, at the Ramsey County Courthouse Basement Meeting Room.

Situation Reports published by the N.D. Division of Emergency Management are posted on the Division's Internet home page. The address is: <http://www.state.nd.us/dem>.

Douglas C. Friez, State Director